

return of the female, and I must admit that it was with some difficulty that I was able to discover the nest again, so well was it hidden. The female again hurriedly flushed which helped me out from further search. In late summer and early fall it is a tedious matter to make these little mouse-like sparrows flush, and once put up they pitch down into the grass apparently only a short distance away, and evidently worm their way through the tangled grass to a distant part of the field. In 1905 I saw the first bird April 30, and the last Oct. 1; in 1904 the last was secured Oct. 2. In 1906 I noted the first May 6; in 1908, May 6; and in 1909, May 12.—B. H. SWALES, *Grosse Isle, Mich.*

The Impaling Instinct in Shrikes.—The shrike habit of impaling its prey on thorns is mentioned in nearly every book on birds, but the greatest diversity exists as to the reason given for the habit, some maintaining that it is done out of an innate love of torture, others, to lure other victims, still others, that it serves only as a fork to hold the prey, while most seem to agree with Audubon that it is "quite a mystery."

As I can find, in the literature at my disposal, only three references to its returning to feed on its victim (Condor, IV, also quoted in Bailey's 'Handbook of the Birds of the Western United States'; Bull. 9, U. S. Dept. of Agric., Div. of Biol. Sur.; and Knight's statement in 'Birds of Maine' that "sometimes they do" return), it seemed desirable to put the following observation on record.

The shrike (*Lanius ludovicianis excubitorides*) in the vicinity of Albuquerque, New Mexico, feeds, during the late fall and winter, quite frequently on the lizards (*Uta stansburiana* and *Holbrookia maculata*) which usually are about in some numbers during the warmer hours of an average winter day. These the shrike impales on thorns, etc., according to its usual custom with small birds and grasshoppers. But the month of December, 1909, was unusually cold and the lizards did not appear.

While riding over the mesa early in January I both saw and heard a shrike perched on a desert willow (*Chilopsis*) feeding on some dry hard substance. Examination showed that the food was the extremely dry bodies of some lizards that had all the appearance of having been placed there several weeks before. The ground about was strewn with fragments and there were still many on the thorn-like branches of the *Chilopsis*. It was the noise the bird made in his attempt to break up this material that first attracted my attention. It is well to observe that in our dry atmosphere such an impaled animal does not decay as it would in a more humid climate but cures perfectly. In fact the native people regularly dry pieces of meat for future use by fastening it to the clothes-line where it is exposed to the almost tropical sun and desert wind.—J. R. WATSON, *University of New Mexico.*

Petrochelidon fulva pallida in Texas.—Among a number of skins collected at Kerrville, Texas, by Mr. Isadore Prions which I recently received

were a male Cliff Swallow taken April 23, and a female taken April 24, 1910, which I identified as this species. Mr. Oberholser, who has kindly examined them, agrees with me. This adds another species to our Check-List.—LOUIS B. BISHOP, *New Haven, Conn.*

The Bank Swallow at Savannah, Georgia.—On September 3, 1910, a Bank Swallow (*Riparia riparia*) was brought to me by Mr. Cord. Assendorf, Jr. As this is, so far as I know, the first record for the species in this locality it may be worth recording.—W. J. HOXIE, *Savannah, Ga.*

The Mockingbird near Boston.—In 'The Auk' for October, 1909, I recorded the breeding of a pair of Mockingbirds (*Mimus polyglottos*) in West Roxbury, Mass., last year. I have recently learned that a pair of these birds bred at Roslindale, about a mile and a half from this locality, in the spring of 1902. My informant is Mrs. Seriah Stevens of Roslindale, who published an account of the nesting in 'Zion's Herald,' a Boston Methodist weekly, for March 3, 1909. Mrs. Stevens assures me that the account there given is entirely true except as to the location of the nest, which was not on her own grounds, as stated for literary purposes, but elsewhere in the neighborhood. Four young were hatched, but when they were about half grown the mother bird was found dead near the nest. The male, however, brought up the brood and launched them from the nest. The father bird and two of the young were seen together near their old home as late as August of that year, but then disappeared and have not been seen there since. The male bird was the one recorded by me in 'The Auk' for July, 1902 (Vol. XIX, p. 292), as having been observed by me on March 23 of that year, and this is the reported unsuccessful nesting referred to in my note of last October.

In this connection I wish to report that the male which bred near my house last year remained in the neighborhood all the autumn and winter and began singing March 21 of this year, the exact anniversary of the beginning of his song the year before. He sang finely and imitated the notes of many birds not due to arrive here for a month or two later. In fact, he introduced imitations which I had not heard from him last year, exhibiting what seemed a remarkable memory for bird-notes. He sang every morning near the house for four weeks, but his mate never arrived and after April 19 he gave it up. I saw him once or twice afterwards and heard of him a few other times, but since about the middle of May he seems to have disappeared entirely. Another Mockingbird was seen in the Arnold Arboretum, about two miles and a half away, in winter and early spring by several observers. He sang freely in April but not very well and seemed not to imitate the notes of other birds. He was believed to be a young bird and very possibly was one of the brood raised by my pair. This bird also disappeared without having found a mate. All this goes to support the view held by Mr. Brewster (*Birds of the Cambridge Region*, pp. 62-64), that birds breeding beyond their normal